

PUGET SOUND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

April 19, 2013 | Day 96 of the 105-day legislative session

This Legislative Update highlights the issues impacting our region's work to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound. Previous editions are available online at www.psp.wa.gov.

WEEKLY REVIEW

Special legislative session looming

There are 10 days left in the regularly scheduled legislative session and it looks like we are headed into overtime. Closed-door negotiations on the budget are underway, but as reported last week, the philosophical differences between the House and Senate make it very unlikely the Legislature will complete its work by the end of next week.

As negotiations between the House and Senate continue, there is strong bipartisan support for many of the highest ranked Puget Sound budget priorities. It is important for partners to stay vigilant and vocal. To see the differences between the Senate, House and Governor's budget please read last week's legislative update at: http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/4_12_LegislativeUpdate.pdf

Policy cutoff and revenue proposals rule the week

Wednesday was the deadline for non-budget bills to pass the opposite chamber. Most of the bills related to Puget Sound are on their way to the Governor's desk (*details below*). Meanwhile, the House continued its work on revenue solutions. This afternoon the House Transportation Committee held a public hearing on another transportation proposal to provide substantial funding for the Puget Sound Gateway Project (*State Route 509 & 167*), relieving I-5 congestion along key interchanges near Joint Base Lewis-McChord, road maintenance and other important transportation projects.

Also in the House, the Finance Committee held a public hearing on House Bill 2038, a billion-dollar tax proposal targeted at funding K-12 and higher education. The committee also considered a proposal aiming to strengthen the review of the Legislature's goals for tax breaks by requiring every new tax break provide a statement of legislative intent and an expiration date.

2013 SESSION AT A GLANCE

Length: 105 days. If necessary, the Governor can call for a 30-day special session. Legislators can call themselves into special session with a two-thirds vote.

Next Cutoff: April 28, 2013 - Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

Information:

- For up-to-date legislative information, visit: www.leg.wa.gov
- To watch or listen to a legislative hearing, visit: www.tvw.org
- For both current and previous copies of the Legislative Update, visit: www.psp.wa.gov

Communication and Coordination:

If you are planning to testify on a bill, meet with legislators, or would like assistance with state legislative issues regarding Puget Sound priorities—please contact:

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Tribes, local governments and other leaders support Puget Sound restoration funding

There is broad support throughout our region to fully fund Puget Sound's number one Capital Budget priority—the **Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration (PSAR)** account at \$80 million. The Tulalip tribe supports fully funding PSAR because it is one of the most important actions to protect and restore critical habitat—ensuring treaty rights are protected and Chinook salmon are available in perpetuity. The Pierce County Regional Council supports PSAR because it puts people to work—creating jobs and supporting the highest priority habitat restoration projects in local communities. The Puget Sound Leadership Council, Salmon Recovery Council and Ecosystem Coordination Board supports PSAR because it advances the region's Puget Sound goals—implementing the science-based watershed plans developed and prioritized by a broad regional coalition of local jurisdictions, Tribes, environmental groups, businesses, farmers, and state and federal agencies.

We strongly support Gov. Inslee's proposal to fully fund PSAR—the region's number one Capital Budget priority—at \$80 million, in contrast to the House proposal at \$70 million and the Senate at \$60 million.

Read some of the letters to legislators in support of fully funding PSAR:

Tulalip Tribe - <http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/Tulalip%20Tribes%20PSAR%20support.pdf>

Leadership Council - http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/PSAR_Honeyford-Nelson-Dunshee-Warnick.pdf

Conservation Districts improve coordination to advance Puget Sound priorities

The twelve Puget Sound Conservation Districts recently signed an Interlocal Agreement to strengthen their important role for protecting and restoring the health of Puget Sound. The agreement paves the way for Districts to share financial resources, technical expertise and staff to implement the Partnership's 2020 Action Agenda—the federally approved plan to restore the health of Puget Sound. Funding for Conservation Districts fared well in the House, Senate and Governor's budgets. We need to hold the line because Conservation Districts have a key role in assisting local, state, federal, and tribal governments and stakeholders with some of the most important Puget Sound regional priorities.

LEGISLATION PERTINENT TO PUGET SOUND

SHELLFISH

Coastal Marine Advisory Council: Sen. Hatfield's legislation, [Senate Bill 5603](#), to establish the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council and the Washington Marine Resources Advisory Council, passed the House with an 82 to 12 vote on Tuesday. The bill now moves to the Governor's desk. The Coastal Council will serve as a forum on coastal issues such as fisheries, shellfish aquaculture and ocean energy. The marine council will advance the recommendations from the ocean acidification report.

HABITAT

Landowner liability: Rep. Stanford's legislation to limit landowner liability for habitat projects, [House Bill 1194](#), was amended and advanced off the Senate by a 48 to 0 vote. Because the bill was amended, it must go back to the House for concurrence. You can read the adopted amendments on the bottom of the following webpage: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1194&year=2013>

Conservation easements: Rep. Sawyer's legislation allowing tribes to hold conservation easements, [House Bill 1277](#), advanced out of the Senate on Monday by a 48 to 0 vote, with one amendment. The House concurred by a 73 to 21 vote and the bill now moves to the Governor's desk.

Aquatic invasive species: Sen. Honeyford's aquatic invasive species legislation, [Substitute Senate Bill 5702](#), passed the House floor on Tuesday by a 95 to 1 vote. The next stop is Gov. Inslee's desk. The bill would make it illegal to transport recreational or commercial watercraft into the state without meeting certain invasive species documentation requirements. It also repeals the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee.

TOXICS

Derelict vessels: Rep. Hansen's derelict vessel legislation, [Substitute House Bill 1245](#) passed the Senate by a 44 to 3 vote. It now returns to the House for concurrence before final approval by Gov. Inslee. The bill would create a study group to analyze and propose improvements to marine policies regarding derelict vessels. The Partnership thanks the Washington State Legislature, Dept. of Natural Resources and many other partner organizations for passing this important legislation. Attention now turns to the budget proposals, which includes \$2 million in the Operating Budget for the derelict vessel program and \$10 million in the Capital Budget to expedite removal of the more than 230 older, larger, more expensive ships that threaten the health of Puget Sound.

Model Toxics Control Account (MTCA): Discussions continue on [Senate Bill 5296](#), which would reorganize state MTCA accounts with the intent of making it more difficult to sweep funds away from cleanup and prevention projects. The bill continues to evolve and Sen. Ranker's brownfields legislation, Senate Bill 5201, has been added to the latest version. The MTCA bill is in the Rules Committee and a vote by the Senate floor is anticipated before the adjournment of the regular scheduled legislative session.

UPCOMING HEARINGS RELATED TO PUGET SOUND

Monday, April 22 to Friday April 26

No Puget Sound-related hearings scheduled.